

January 25, 2010

Legislative Update 2010



Iowa Department of Human Services

Special points of interest:

- * Early Retirement
- * Accountability on Olmstead Efforts
- * More Needy Families Could Avoid Hunger

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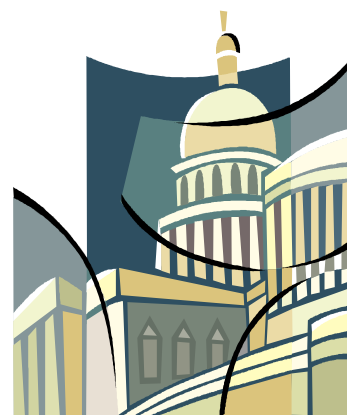
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“Early Retirement Incentives”

“The safety and health of Iowans who rely on our services are our highest priorities” stated Director Krogmeier in a letter to the Department of Management about SF 2062, the early retirement incentive bill passed by the Iowa Senate this week on a vote of 41-7. The bill now goes to the House where passage is expected. This legislation is considered by many legislators as one part of a package of bills that will transform the face of state government. The legislation provides two incentives for eligible employees: 1) a \$1000 per year of service (up to 25 years) incentive to be paid out in five equal install-

ments beginning September 2010 and 2) a health insurance contribution to pay the premium cost for five years following termination. An application for participation is required by employees by April 15th with a termination date of May 28th. The legislation prohibits Departments from filling vacancies created by the retirement incentive package unless approved by DOM. This provision is creating some concern within DHS because of our direct client services at our nine facilities and in our field offices across the state. Director Krogmeier wants to assure critical service delivery, accreditation and

licensing standards and maintenance of federal reimbursements as DHS works with DOM to implement this attractive benefit to our employees. DHS employees with questions about the legislation should contact Susan Hase at 281-3095.



“Accountable for Delivery” on Olmstead Efforts

Jeanne Nesbit, Director of the Mental Health & Disability Services Division, updated the Senate Human Resources Committee last week with an Olmstead Progress Report. Nesbit talked about efforts currently underway to identify and implement strategies that allow

Iowans in crisis to maintain their current living arrangements, including Mobile Crisis Response Services and efforts to reduce the number of Iowans placed out of state for treatment. Nesbit highlighted the efforts to increase participation in the Money

Follows the Person grant to help individuals move into community settings. Director Krogmeier is already on record as saying that Iowa needs to “speed up the effort to empower the disabled” to have more choices in where they live.

“More Needy Households Could Avoid Hunger”

Wendy Rickman, Director of Division of Adult, Children & Family Services, and Director Krogmeier provided options to increase food assistance for the Senate Human Resources Committee to consider last week. The Legislature requested a study over the recent interim about the implications of increasing eligibility to 160% (over the current 130% of pov-

erty level) and eliminating an asset test. Legislators were generally receptive to increasing food assistance to more lowans in need, but did not make final decisions about parameters. Currently 160% of federal poverty means a household of 4 earns \$35,280. There is a state cost to implement increased benefits but with that lies the potential of increased

federal benefits for lowans.

According to Krogmeier, “we look forward to further dialogue with policy makers in order to reach more lowans in need”.

State Government Reorganization

State Government Reorganization efforts continue to be a major push at the Capitol. The Department continues to strive to make legislators aware of the potential consequences of the proposed changes in

information technology, span of control, Medicaid activities, and the potential closure of Mt. Pleasant Mental Health Institute, among other issues. DHS has suggested a series of amendments to ensure that

no federal funds, accreditation or licensing requirements are jeopardized by the provisions in the bill.

Did you know?

Food assistance is one of the building blocks of social services.

Seen at the Capitol

Thanks to all the DHS staff who contribute to our legislative efforts. Many people are part of this effort and this article strives to mention just a few people who made it to the Capitol this week. Thanks to Eileen Creager, Jeff Anderson, Wendy Rickman, Jeanne Nesbit, Sally Titus, Jan Clausen, Jennifer

Vermeer and Ann Wiebers.



Upcoming Events

January 25th at 1:00—

Director Krogmeier is introduced before the full Senate as part of the Confirmation process.

January 26th at 10:00—

Human Services Budget Subcommittee hears from DHS on Reorganization Bill concerns and hears from other groups about FaDDS and TANF.

January 28th at 10:00.—

Human Services Budget Subcommittee hears from the Mental Health Task Force (“Ro Foege” Group).

February 2nd at 10:00—

Human Services Budget Subcommittee hears from State Medicaid Director Jennifer Vermeer on Medicaid increases and IowaCare Renewal.

Note that events at the Capitol are always subject to change.





Iowa Department of Human Services

The Mission of the Iowa Department of Human Services is to help individuals and families achieve safe, stable, self-sufficient, and health lives, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the state. We do this by keeping a customer focus, striving for excellence, sound stewardship of state resources, maximizing the use of federal funding and leveraging opportunities, and by working with our public and private partners to achieve results.

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